

# Utah Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program Evaluation Report

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***Executive Summary and Recommendations***

A statewide evaluation of Utah school counseling program was conducted to address the following questions:

- (1) Do school counseling programs in Utah high schools contribute significantly to students' educational outcomes?
- (2) What aspects of school practice contribute the most to students' educational outcomes?
- (3) Based upon these results, how might school counseling practice in Utah be improved?

The evaluation model used in this study utilized three types of data to examine the contribution of school counseling programs and practices to student educational outcomes. School-level outcome data (e.g., attendance rates and suspension rates) were obtained from the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). School-level demographic data (e.g., per pupil expenditures and the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch) were also obtained from the USOE. Information about schools' school counseling practices and programs was obtained through an internet-based survey of school counselors and principals. This survey was composed of one 20-item standardized measure of program implementation (i.e., *The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey*, Carey & Elsner, 2005; Clemens, Carey & Harrington, in press), items used in previous state-level

evaluations, and items specific to Utah that were developed in consultation with personnel at the Utah State Office of Education.

Outcome and demographic data were obtained from a total of 280 schools in Utah. The breakdown of school settings was: 91 rural schools, 116 suburban, and 15 urban (plus 11 other coded as "alternative" setting). Type of school included: 8 Intermediate Schools; 63 Middle Schools, 65 Junior High Schools and 144 High Schools (a few schools contained multiple levels and were classified at the highest level for which outcome data were available). Sixteen of these schools were described as "alternative schools" meaning that they served particular groups of students.

School counseling survey data were contributed by 161 counselors (reflecting 57.5 % of the schools) and by 128 principals (reflecting 45.7% of the schools). However, many respondents did not complete the full survey. A total of 65 counselors and 61 principles completed the entire survey resulting in overall response return rates of 23.2% for counselors and 21.8% for principals. Many counselors and principles from Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools did not respond to items that seemed more focused on high school programs (e.g. questions regarding Perkins vocational programs).

Seventeen school-level measures related to student educational outcomes for high school students were identified. These measures included:

- Suspension rate
- Discipline incidence rate
- Attendance rate
- Graduation/Dropout rate

- Average ACT score
- Percentage of students taking the SAT
- Percentage of students scoring Proficient in Math on the state standardized test
- Percentage of Students scoring Proficient in English on the state standardized test
- Percentage of students taking Advanced Placement courses
- Percent Proficient in Reading (Perkins Data)
- Percent Proficient in Math (Perkins Data)
- Percent Proficient in Technical Skills (Perkins Data)
- Percent Program Completion (Perkins Data)
- Percent Graduation (Perkins Data)
- Percent Placed (Perkins Data)
- Nontraditional Program Participation rate (Perkins Data)
- Nontraditional Program Completion rate (Perkins Data)

For Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools, five school-level measures related to student educational outcomes were identified. These measures included:

- Suspension rate
- Discipline incident rate
- Attendance rate
- Percentage of students scoring Proficient in Math on the state standardized test
- Percentage of Students scoring Proficient in English on the state standardized test

Sixteen alternative schools were excluded from the overall analyses. This decision was made because it is likely that student demographics in alternative

schools are different from demographics in the other schools since the mission of alternative schools is to serve special populations of students (e.g., students with credit problems, discipline concerns, or those with an at-risk status). All participating high schools were analyzed together. After initial analyses found few important differences among the schools at the other three levels, the Intermediate, Middle and Junior high schools were pooled in a separate set of analyses.

Overall, the schools that participated in the evaluation showed high levels of program implementation, school counselor time use patterns that are considered to reflect good practice, and an average of about 8 years of implementation of a Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling program.

School Counseling programs at the high school level were found to contribute to several important student educational outcomes after controlling for demographic differences among schools. School counseling *program features* accounted for a significant amount of variability in the percentage of students who achieve Mathematics proficiency, the percentage of students who achieve Reading proficiency, the average ACT score, the percentage of students taking the ACT, the graduation rate (Perkins data) and non-traditional program participation (Perkins data).

School Counselor *ratios* accounted for a significant amount of variability in attendance rates and discipline incident rates. Also, the length of time that a Comprehensive Developmental Counseling program had been implemented in a school was found to be significantly associated with both higher attendance rates and lower suspension rates.

**These results strongly indicate that school counseling programs in Utah high schools are making measureable contributions to student achievement and that more effective systems for planning, organizing and delivering school counseling services, more favorable student-to-counselor ratios, and sustained implementation of a Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Program can generally be expected to result in better student educational outcomes.**

Positive student education outcomes can be expected to result when school programs are structured so that:

- A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors.
- Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to these services.
- All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.
- School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs.
- School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps.
- School counselor job descriptions match actual duties.
- School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.
- The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards.
- School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees.

- School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement.
- The school counseling program develops yearly management agreements with principals to guide program goals and activities.

In Utah high schools, several *school counselor activities* were found to be related to improved student educational outcomes. Features of effective practices (i.e., those which impact student educational outcomes) can be considered to include:

- School counselors consulting with administrators concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.
- School counselors providing consultation to other school-based personnel concerning all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.
- School counselors implementing a career planning process that involves collaboration with students and parents/guardians to assist students in developing a four-year plan.
- School counselors helping all students identify their interests and abilities.
- School counselors assisting all students in creating schedules that reflected their individual abilities, interests, and future goals.
- School counselors helping all students develop a formalized four- or five-year SEOP.
- School counselors implementing a program that ensures that all students receive career development education, including career awareness, exploration, planning and application.
- School counselors implementing a program that includes instruction on the Utah CTE High School to College and Career Pathways.

- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that encourages more students to take higher level math, science, and writing classes.
- Having a career center available for student use before, during, and after school (outside of regular classes).
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that helps more students build schedules based on their individual career goals.
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that helps more students develop post-secondary education or training plans.
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that encourages more students to take Career and Technical Education classes.

Differences in school counseling programs for schools meeting AYP versus those not achieving this status were examined. The only significant difference found between these two groups was that non-AYP schools were more likely to have higher student-to-counselor ratios. Program implementation, counselors' use of time, and the employment of specific counseling practices associated with effective practices seemed equivalent between AYP and non-AYP schools.

In participating Intermediate, Middle, and Junior High Schools, higher scores regarding the *level of school counseling program implementation* were found to be associated with higher percentages of students achieving Proficiency on the Math and Reading sections of the state standardized test. In addition, student-to-counselor ratios also accounted for a significant amount of the variability in Math Proficiency.

**These results strongly indicate that school counseling programs in Utah's Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools are making measureable**

**contributions to student achievement and that more effective delivery systems for school counseling services and more favorable student-to-counselor ratios can generally be expected to result in better student educational outcomes.**

Unfortunately, follow-up analyses of scales and items to identify specific effective practices failed to find interpretable patterns of results, probably because of the relatively small number of schools at each of the three levels (i.e., Intermediate, Middle, Junior High). **A follow-up evaluation that captures school counseling program data from a greater number of Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools may be warranted.**

This evaluation found evidence that school counseling programs in Utah high schools contribute significantly to students' educational outcomes. This evaluation identified specific characteristics of school counseling programs and particular school counselor activities that impact student educational outcomes. Furthermore, this evaluation found that favorable student-to-counselor ratios also impact student educational outcomes.

We recommend that the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) continue existing policies and programs that will encourage and support the development of, implementation and maintenance of strong school counseling programs in high schools. The USOE ought to specifically promote the adoption of the programmatic features and aspects of practice identified in this report (see above) as being significantly associated with improved student outcomes.

We also recommend that a follow-up evaluation be conducted to identify effective practices in Utah's Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools.

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### ***Introduction***

This evaluation addresses the following questions:

- (1) Do school counseling programs in Utah public schools contribute significantly to students' educational outcomes?
- (2) What aspects of school practice contribute the most to students' educational outcomes?
- (3) Based upon these results, how might school counseling practice in Utah be improved?

### ***Conceptual Model for the Evaluation***

The design of this statewide evaluation was modeled after previous statewide evaluations in Missouri (Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2003; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997) and Washington state (Sink & Stroh, 2003) and was based on the evaluation model developed by the National Leadership Cadre (2007).

The evaluation model used three types of data to study the contribution of counseling programs and practices to student educational outcomes. School-level outcome data (e.g., attendance rates and suspension rates) were obtained from the USOE. School-level demographic data (e.g., per pupil expenditures and the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch) were also obtained from the USOE. Information of schools' school counseling practices and programs was obtained through an internet-based survey of high school counselors and principals.

This survey was composed of one 20-item standardized measure of program implementation (*The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey*, Carey & Elsner, 2005; Clemens, Carey & Harrington, in press), items used in previous state-level evaluations, and items specific to Utah that were developed in consultation with personnel at the USOE.

The evaluation model called for an overall analysis of the relationships of school counseling program characteristics to student outcomes after controlling for the variability in outcomes that is related to demographic differences among schools. Then, where appropriate, more specific correlational analyses were conducted to identify which particular practices were associated with specific student outcomes. Finally, AYP and non-AYP schools were compared and contrasted to determine how counseling differed between schools with known characteristics and student outcomes.

The evaluation model employed is cross-sectional and correlational and takes advantage of existing variability in practice to understand how school counselors' roles and responsibilities are related to outcomes. The major limitation of this model is its capacity to assure that given practices are *causally* related to improvements in student outcomes. This evaluation model will, however, identify practices that are likely to cause improvements in student outcomes. Subsequent confirmation through longitudinal study is advised in order to confirm that changes in practice lead to improved outcomes.

## ***Methodology***

### *Survey Development*

This survey used in this evaluation study consisted of a total of 52 questions with items composed from three sources: *The School Counseling Program Implementation Survey* (SCPIS) (Carey & Elsner, 2005; Clemens, Carey & Harrington, in press) items used in previous district- and state-level evaluations (i.e., the Chicago Public Schools and the state of Missouri); and items specific to the state of Utah that were created in consultation with personnel at the USOE. The SCPIS was originally developed by Elsner and Carey (2005) at the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Factor analysis of the SCPIS, a standardized measure of program implementation, revealed a three-factor model that accounted for 54% of the variance in the data and a two-factor model that accounted for 47% of the variance in the data. Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for SCPIS subscales ranged from .79 to .87 (Clemens, Carey & Harrington, in press).

The first two survey questions asked participants for their high school name and position with possible responses of "Principal", "Guidance Director", "School Counselor" or "Other". A response of "Other" was included for schools that did not have a professional school counselor in the building and therefore a career counselor or mental health provider may be completing the survey. The remainder of the survey questions were divided into three sections: 22 items about school counseling program characteristics; 13 questions about delivery of services; and 15 questions specific to the state of Utah. These items were written to reflect concrete,

observable program characteristics (e.g., “Counselors implement and assist students in developing effective career and educational plans.”) For questions about school counseling program characteristics, participants were given the directions: “Please rate each statement below in terms of the degree to which it is currently implemented in your school counseling program.” The rating scale used was: *1= Not Present; 2= Development in Progress; 3= Partly Implemented; 4= Fully Implemented*. Questions related to delivery of service and those specific to the state of Utah were preceded by the directions: “Please rate how accurate each statement is about the work of school counselors in implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program in your building.” The rating scale used in these two sections of the survey read: *1=Not Accurate; 2= Somewhat Accurate; 3=Accurate; 4=Very Accurate; 5=Extremely Accurate*.

#### *Data Collection*

**Survey Data.** An email from the Utah State Office of Education was sent to principals and guidance directors of every public high school in Utah. The email informed respondents that they would soon be receiving an online survey as part of a national study examining if more fully implemented school counseling programs and school counselor activities are associated with stronger positive student outcomes. The email stressed the importance of both a principal and guidance director (or lead counselor) completing the survey and explained that the survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Two days after this initial email principals and guidance directors (or lead counselors) received the online survey via their school email address. Two follow-up reminder emails were sent to

participants when they did not respond to the survey. A total of 128 principals and 161 school counselors completed at least part of the survey.

**Demographic Data.** Data were collected on a number of student demographic variables including: the percentage of students who racially identify as Black or African-American, Latino/a or Hispanic, Asian, or Native American; percentage of students eligible for subsidized lunch; and per pupil expenditure for General Education, Title 1, Special Education, and ELL students. Data were also collected on the following school-level variables: 9-12 enrollment; school setting; percentage of full-time school counselors in the high school; percentage of full-time teachers in the high school. These data were provided by the Utah State Office of Education.

**Outcome Data.** For high schools, seventeen school-level measures related to student educational outcomes were identified. These measures included:

- Suspension rate
- Discipline incidence rate
- Attendance rate
- Graduation/Dropout rate
- Average ACT score
- Percentage of students taking the ACT
- Percentage of students scoring Proficient in Math on state standardized test
- Percentage of students Proficient in Reading on state standardized test
- Percentage of students taking Advanced Placement courses
- Percent Proficient in Reading (Perkins data)
- Percent Proficient in Math (Perkins data)
- Percent Proficiency in Technical Skills (Perkins data)
- Percent Program Completion (Perkins data)

- Percent Graduation (Perkins data)
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For Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools, five school-level measures related to student educational outcomes were identified. These measures included:

- Suspension Rate
- Discipline Incident Rate
- Attendance Rate
- Percentage of students scoring Proficient in Math on the state standardized test
- Percentage of Students scoring Proficient in English on the state standardized test

### *Data Analysis*

Outcome and demographic data were obtained from a total of 280 schools in Utah. The breakdown of school setting was: 91 rural schools, 116 suburban, and 15 urban (plus 11 other coded as "alternative"). Type of school included: 8 Intermediate Schools; 63 Middle Schools, 65 Junior High Schools and 144 High Schools (a few schools contained multiple levels were classified at the highest level where outcome data were available). Sixteen of these schools were described as "alternative schools" meaning that they served particular groups of students.

School Counseling survey data were contributed by 161 counselors (reflecting 57.5 % of the schools) and by 128 principles (reflecting 45.7% of the schools). However, many respondents did not complete the full survey. A total of 65 counselors and 61 principles completed the entire survey, resulting in overall

response return rates of 23.2% for counselors and 21.8% for principals. Many counselors and principals from Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools did not respond to items (e.g. questions regarding Perkins vocational programs) that seemed more focused on high school programs.

One hundred percent of respondents who filled out the principal survey indicated that they were in fact the principal of the school. Of the respondents who filled out the counselor survey, 15.5% were guidance directors, 83.4% were school counselors and 1 person indicated “other”. This person was most likely a career counselor.

Both a school counselor and the building principal completed the entire survey in a total of 64 schools. Pearson correlation procedures were used to determine the strength of relationship between the counselors’ and principals’ ratings on the *School Counseling Program Implementation Scale* (SCPIS) which is composed of specific items related to how school counseling services are planned, organized, delivered, and evaluated (e.g., “All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.”). Correlations between counselors and principals were very low (Total scale = .287; Program Orientation subscale = .153; Data Use subscale = .108; Services subscale = .454). In fact, none of these correlations reached a (.05) level of statistical significance. **This means that there was very little correspondence between counselors’ and principals’ views of the nature of the school counseling program.**

It is difficult to say whether this finding can be generalized given that it is based on only 22.9% (64 out of 280) of participating schools. However, based on the finding of very little correspondence between counselors and principals about their views of the nature of the school counseling program, we decided not to combine the data from counselors and principals and instead to use only the counselor survey data in subsequent analyses. It is also quite striking that based on data from 20% of the schools, principals and counselors do not seem to have similar perceptions about the structure and functioning of the school counseling program. Moreover, as noted below, this evaluation found more robust correlations between the counselor survey and outcome measures than between the principal survey and outcome measures. Since the survey data and outcome data come from very independent sources, this difference can most likely be attributed to counselors having a more precise and accurate understanding of the functioning of the school counseling program.

Sixteen alternative schools were excluded from the overall analyses. This decision was made because it is likely that student demographics in alternative schools are different from demographics in the other schools since the mission of the alternative schools is to serve special populations of students (e.g., students with credit problems, discipline concerns, or an at-risk status). All participating high schools were analyzed together. After initial analyses found few important differences among the schools at the other three levels, the Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools were pooled in a separate set of analyses.

## ***Evaluation Results***

### *Survey Summary for School Counselors and Principals*

Descriptive statistics for the survey are presented below in three parts.

Table 1 includes the *School Counseling Program Implementation Survey* items for the surveys completed by school counselors in high schools.

Table 1. High School Counseling Survey (Counselor Ratings): Descriptive Statistics for SCPIS Items			
<i>SCPIS Item</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors.	3.52	.734	70
Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to them.	3.80	.440	69
The program operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students.	3.33	.705	69
The program has a set of clear, measurable student learning objectives, and goals are established for academics, social/personal skills, and career development.	3.37	.673	69
Needs Assessments are completed regularly and guide program planning.	3.37	.579	69
All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.	3.61	.572	68
The program ensures that all students have academic plans that include testing, individual advisement, long-term planning, and placement.	3.80	.431	69
The program has an effective referral and follow-up system for handling student crises.	3.72	.511	69
School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs.	3.61	.555	69
School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps.	2.96	.859	69
School counselor job descriptions match actual duties.	3.43	.653	69
School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.	3.67	.555	69
The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards.	3.60	.519	69

An annual review is conducted to get information for improving next year's programs.	3.80	.551	69
School counselors use computer software to access student data.	3.87	.380	69
School counselors use computer software to analyze student data.	3.60	.667	69
School counselors use computer software to use data for school improvement.	3.62	.545	69
The school counseling program has the resources to allow counselors to complete appropriate professional development activities.	3.68	.653	69
School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees.	3.60	.731	69
School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement.	3.66	.559	69
The school counseling program develops yearly management agreements with principals to guide program goals and activities.	3.36	.919	69

Table 2 includes *School Counseling Program Implementation Survey* items for surveys completed by school counselors in Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools.

Table 2. Intermediate, Middle and Junior High School Counseling Survey (Counselor Ratings): Descriptive Statistics for SCPIS Items			
<i>SCPIS Item</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors.	3.63	.730	67
Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to them.	3.86	.346	67
The program operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students.	3.51	.551	66
The program has a set of clear measurable student learning objectives and goals are established for academics, social/personal skills, and career development.	3.58	.553	66
Needs Assessments are completed regularly and guide program planning.	3.66	.605	65
All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.	3.80	.406	64
The program ensures that all students have academic plans that include testing, individual advisement, long-term planning, and placement.	3.86	.390	65
The program has an effective referral and follow-up system for handling student crises.	3.84	.396	65

School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs.	3.73	.427	65
School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps.	3.10	.797	65
School counselor job descriptions match actual duties.	3.38	.718	64
School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.	3.77	.553	65
The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards.	3.68	.541	65
An annual review is conducted to get information for improving next year's programs.	3.68	.589	65
School counselors use computer software to access student data.	3.88	.366	65
School counselors use computer software to analyze student data.	3.61	.670	65
School counselors use computer software to use data for school improvement.	3.76	.423	66
The school counseling program has the resources to allow counselors to complete appropriate professional development activities.	3.68	.609	65
School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees.	3.64	.664	65
School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement.	3.70	.486	64
The school counseling program develops yearly management agreements with principals to guide program goals and activities.	3.42	.920	65

**It is important to note that school counselor scores on all SCPIS items are quite high in comparison to data from other states.** This suggests that the school counseling programs in Utah's Intermediate, Middle, Junior High and High Schools that contributed data to this study are, on average, more fully implementing a Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Model than are most programs nationwide.

Tables 3 through 6 contains descriptive statistics for the five *school counselor time use items* contained in the survey, as reported by school counselors. Since

recommended time for each component of a Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Model varies by school level, averages are reported separately for Intermediate, Middle, Junior High, and High Schools. It is worthwhile to note that the general time use patterns for each component (i.e., Guidance Curriculum activities, Responsive Service activities, and Individual Planning activities) at all levels in Utah schools closely correspond to suggested patterns for Comprehensive Developmental Guidance (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001).

It is also important to note that Utah school counselors report on average spending **4 to 8% of their time on activities that are unrelated to their role as counselors and that on average an additional 12-13% of their time is spent on System Support (i.e., program-related activities that do not involve student contact)**. While the System Support time use data is consistent with data from other states, the *Unrelated Duties* averages are quite low. It is difficult to say whether these data are representative of the state as a whole.

In summary, it is clear that school counselors who contributed survey data to this evaluation study work in schools where the school counseling program is more fully implemented than is the national norm, where relatively little time is spent in out-of-role activities, and where time use patterns reflect suggested targets for Comprehensive Developmental Guidance programs.

Table 3. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Time Use (High School)			
<i>Time Use Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Guidance Curriculum	19.4	7.75	69
Responsive Services	24.7	8.72	69
Individual Planning	36.4	10.76	69
System Support	13.3	6.00	69
Unrelated Duties	8.0	6.83	69

Table 4. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Time Use (Junior High School)			
<i>Time Use Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Guidance Curriculum	24.5	6.35	28
Responsive Services	30.0	6.77	28
Individual Planning	29.6	7.55	28
System Support	12.5	4.77	28
Unrelated Duties	4.2	3.11	28

Table 5. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Time Use (Middle School)			
<i>Time Use Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Guidance Curriculum	25.4	7.79	34
Responsive Services	26.3	9.03	34
Individual Planning	27.7	8.19	34
System Support	13.4	6.79	34
Unrelated Duties	8.1	7.06	34

Table 6. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Time Use (Intermediate School)			
<i>Time Use Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Guidance Curriculum	19.2	3.82	3
Responsive Services	39.3	14.01	3
Individual Planning	21.3	10.02	3
System Support	15.2	4.19	3
Unrelated Duties	5.0	5.00	3

Table 7 contains descriptive statistics from the high school counselor surveys for the additional school counseling practice items that were in continuous response format.

Table 7. School Counseling Survey (Counselor Responses for High Schools): Descriptive Statistics for Counseling Practice Items			
<i>Item</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
All students experiencing problems that might interfere with their school success can easily receive help from a school counselor.	4.29	.764	70
School counselors effectively consult with administrators concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	4.33	.876	70
School counselors effectively consult with community- based mental health professionals concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	3.23	1.115	70
School counselors provide appropriate referral services for all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	3.81	1.026	70
School counselors provide effective consultation to other school-based personnel concerning all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	4.15	.882	70
Counselors provide effective college counseling services to all students.	4.33	.732	70
Counselors implement and assist students in developing effective career and educational plans.	4.26	.669	70
Education and career planning activities include individual and group guidance sessions that assist all students and parents/guardians in effectively using standardized test results.	3.61	1.077	70
The education and career planning process involves collaboration with students and parents/guardians to assist students in developing a four-year plan.	4.17	.948	67
Counselors provide all students and parents/guardians with accurate and up-to-date information about the world of work.	3.61	.808	70
The education and career planning process helps students create meaningful college and career plans.	3.99	.764	70
School counselors help all students identify their interests and abilities.	4.06	.789	70
School counselors help all students to create schedules that reflect their individual abilities, interests, and future goals.	4.28	.854	70
An SEOP policy statement, based on district policy, has been created at my school.	4.50	.776	69
All students develop a formalized four- or five- year SEOP.	4.24	.815	70
The School Counseling program ensures that all students receive career development education, including career awareness, exploration, planning and application.	4.30	.698	69

The career development process includes instruction on the Utah CTE High School to College and Career Pathways.	3.96	.704	70	
Students are exposed to a wide range of career options as part of the guidance curriculum and SEOP conference.	4.11	.766	70	
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking higher-level math, science, and writing classes.	3.90	.972	69	
Students frequently use the career center before, during, and after school (outside of regular classes).	2.76	1.169	70	
All counselors in our school have acquired the skills needed to implement a highly successful Comprehensive Guidance Program.	4.43	.688	70	
For how many years has a Comprehensive Guidance Program been implemented in your school?	8.86	2.445	70	
	<i>N No</i>	<i>N Yes</i>	<i>% No</i>	<i>%Yes</i>
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have built schedules based on their individual career goals.	3	66	4.3	95.6
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have developed post-secondary education or training plans.	2	68	2.9	97.1
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking Career and Technical Education classes.	8	61	11.6	88.4
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are pursuing courses of study that exceed the ACT core recommendations for graduation (please refer to your ACT "High School Profile Report").	9	56	13.8	86.27

Table 8 contains descriptive statistics for the additional school counseling practice items from the Intermediate, Middle and Junior High School Counselor surveys.

Table 8. School Counseling Survey (Counselor Responses for Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools): Descriptive Statistics for Counseling Practice Items.			
<i>Item</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
All students experiencing problems that might interfere with their school success can easily receive help from a school counselor.	4.35	.734	65
School counselors effectively consult with administrators concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	4.46	.660	65
School counselors effectively consult with community- based mental health professionals concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	3.55	1.113	65
School counselors provide appropriate referral services for all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	3.92	.905	65

School counselors provide effective consultation to other school-based personnel concerning all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	4.14	.782	65
Counselors provide effective college counseling services to all students.	3.61	1.111	65
Counselors implement and assist students in developing effective career and educational plans.	4.22	.765	65
Education and career planning activities include individual and group guidance sessions that assist all students and parents/guardians in effectively using standardized test results.	3.74	1.031	65
The education and career planning process involves collaboration with students and parents/guardians to assist students in developing a four-year plan.	3.79	1.133	64
Counselors provide all students and parents/guardians with accurate and up-to-date information about the world of work.	3.80	.970	64
The education and career planning process helps students create meaningful college and career plans.	3.77	.941	65
School counselors help all students identify their interests and abilities.	4.16	.863	65
School counselors help all students to create schedules that reflect their individual abilities, interests, and future goals.	4.05	.906	65
An SEOP policy statement, based on district policy, has been created at my school.	4.42	.983	65
All students develop a formalized four- or five- year SEOP.	4.05	.987	65
The School Counseling program ensures that all students receive career development education, including career awareness, exploration, planning and application.	4.41	.786	64
The career development process includes instruction on the Utah CTE High School to College and Career Pathways.	3.83	.947	64
Students are exposed to a wide range of career options as part of the guidance curriculum and SEOP conference.	4.23	.792	64
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking higher-level math, science, and writing classes.	3.65	.793	65
Students frequently use the career center before, during, and after school (outside of regular classes).	2.86	1.156	64
All counselors in our school have acquired the skills needed to implement a highly successful Comprehensive Guidance Program.	4.45	.746	65
For how many years has a Comprehensive Guidance Program been implemented in your school?	8.62	2.500	65
	N No	N Yes	%No %Yes

As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have built schedules based on their individual career goals.	7	58	10.7	89.2
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have developed post-secondary education or training plans.	6	59	9.2	90.8
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking Career and Technical Education classes.	10	54	16.7	84.4
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are pursuing courses of study that exceed the ACT core recommendations for graduation (please refer to your ACT "High School Profile Report").	21	40	34.4	65.6

Table 9 contains descriptive statistics for the high school counselor survey items in dichotomous format (yes/no) concerning Perkins Program Implementation.

Table 9. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Dichotomous Response Format Items (Counselor Response, High Schools)				
<i>Item</i>	<i>N No</i>	<i>N Yes</i>	<i>% No</i>	<i>% Yes</i>
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school are aligned with the Utah clusters or pathways.	10	48	17.2	82.8
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school are introduced to students and parents before the transition to high school for informed academic and career planning.	23	35	39.7	60.3
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school include a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical education while in school.	20	38	34.5	65.5
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school include postsecondary credit.	25	33	43.1	56.9
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school lead to an associate's degree, baccalaureate or beyond, or certificate or license.	28	30	48.3	51.7

Table 10 contains descriptive statistics for the Intermediate, Middle and Junior High School counselor survey items in dichotomous format (yes/no) concerning Perkins Program Implementation.

Table 10. School Counseling Survey: Descriptive Statistics for Dichotomous Response Format Items (Counselor Response in Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools)				
<i>Item</i>	<i>N No</i>	<i>N Yes</i>	<i>% No</i>	<i>% Yes</i>
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school are aligned with the Utah clusters or pathways.	9	34	20.9	79.1
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school are introduced to students and parents before the transition to high school for informed academic and career planning.	18	24	42.9	57.1
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school include a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical education while in school.	28	14	66.7	33.4
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school include postsecondary credit.	29	13	69.0	31.0
The Perkins Programs of Study at my school lead to an associate's degree, baccalaureate or beyond, or certificate or license.	33	9	24.3	6.6

*High School Hierarchical Linear Regression (Student Outcomes, Demographics, SCPIS and Student-to-Counselor Ratios)*

Hierarchical linear regression was used to determine if there was a significant contribution of the school counseling program to student educational outcomes *after controlling for the variability in outcomes that is related to demographic differences among schools*. Separate analyses were conducted for each of the 17 student outcome measures. In step one of each analysis, per pupil expenditures, percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, percentage of students identifying as a member of a minority group, and school setting (i.e., rural, suburban and urban) were entered into the predictive equation. In step two, student-to-counselor ratio, SCPIS Program subscale, SCPIS Data Use subscale, and the SCPIS Services subscale were entered stepwise into the equation. This allowed for the identification of all variables that contributed to student outcomes after controlling for demographic differences. Separate analyses were conducted for the

counselor and principal SCPIS data. Results for the school counselor SCPIS data are contained in Table 11.

Table 11. Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Results for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Contributions of SCPIS Subscales (Counselor Ratings) and Student-to-Counselor Ratios to Student Educational Outcomes					
<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>Predictor variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>R<sup>2</sup> Change</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Suspension Rate					n.s.
Discipline Rate	Student/Counselor	.418	.122	.157	p. < .003
Attendance Rate	Student/Counselor	.486	.176	.115	p. < .008
Graduation/Dropout Rates					n.s.
ACT Average	SCPIS (Program)	.538	.226	.106	p. < .013
% Students Taking ACT	SCPIS (Program)	.651	.372	.054	p. < .046
% Math Proficient	SCPIS (Program)	.455	.135	.123	p. < .007
	SCPIS (Data)	.561	.247	.118	p. < .005
% Reading Proficient	SCPIS (Program)	.565	.266	.148	p. < .002
	SCPIS (Date)	.643	.355	.094	p. < .007
% taking Advanced Placement classes					n.s.
Reading Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Math Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Tech Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Program Completion (Perkins)					n.s.
Graduation (Perkins)	SCPIS (Services)	.661	.312	.121	p. < .008
	SCPIS (Data)	.669	.425	.166	p. < .005
Placement (Perkins)					n.s.
Nontraditional Program Participation (Perkins)	SCPIS (Services)	.383	.147	.138	p. < .015
Nontraditional Program Completion (Perkins)					n.s.

After controlling for demographic differences amongst schools, the SCPIS Program scale accounted for a significant amount of variability in ACT Average, the percentage of students taking the ACT, the percentage of students who achieve Mathematics proficiency and the percentage of student who achieve Reading proficiency. In addition, the SCPIS Services scale accounted for a significant amount of the variability in Graduation Rate (Perkins Data) and in Non-Traditional Program Participation (Perkins Data). The SCPIS Data Use scale accounted for a significant amount of the variability in the percentage of students who achieve Mathematics proficiency, the percentage of students who achieve Reading proficiency, and the Graduation Rate (Perkins Data). Finally, school counselor ratios accounted for a significant amount of variability in attendance rates and discipline incident rates.

**These results strongly indicate that school counseling programs in Utah are making measureable contributions to student achievement and that more effective delivery systems for school counseling services and more favorable student-to-counselor ratios can generally be expected to result in better student educational outcomes.**

Further analyses of subscales and individual items are needed to better understand effective services.

Results for the Principal SCPIS data are contained in Table 12.

Table 12. Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Results for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Contributions of SCPIS Subscales (Principal Ratings) and
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Student-Counselor Ratios to Student Educational Outcomes					
<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>Predictor variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Adjusted R2</i>	<i>R2 Change</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Suspension Rate					n.s.
Discipline Rate					n.s.
Attendance Rate	SCPIS (Services)	.434	.101	.138	p. < .017
	Student/Counselor	.522	.172	.085	p. < .048
Graduation/Dropout Rates					n.s.
ACT Average					n.s.
% Students Taking ACT	SCPIS (Data)	.652	.359	.094	P, < .022
% Math Proficient					n.s.
% Reading Proficient					n.s.
% Advanced Placement					n.s.
Reading Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Math Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Tech Proficient (Perkins)					n.s.
Program Completion (Perkins)					n.s.
Graduation (Perkins)					n.s.
Placement (Perkins)					n.s.
Nontraditional Program Participation (Perkins)					n.s.
Nontraditional Program Completion (Perkins)					n.s.

Analysis of items from the principal SCPIS reveals less dramatic results than did school counselor SCPIS data. Both the SCPIS Services scale and student-to-counselor ratios accounted for a significant amount of the variability in student attendance after controlling for demographic differences amongst schools. Similarly, the SCPIS Data Use scale accounted for a significant amount of the variability in ACT participation rates. These data suggest that more fully elaborated school counseling programs and better ratios impact both attendance and ACT participation. **The**

**very low correlations (noted above) between school counselors and principals on the surveys suggest that a common understanding of the nature of the school counseling programs and its activities is lacking.** Analyses based on the principal data, while positive, most likely reflect an incomplete understanding of the school counseling program and should be taken as a minimal estimate of its impact. All the subsequent item-level analyses below are based on the survey data from counselors.

*Correlations of SCPIS Scales and Student-to-Counselor Ratios with Student Educational Outcomes in High Schools*

The Pearson correlations between SCPIS (Counselor Survey) Items, Student-to-Counselor Ratios and Student Outcomes are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13. Summary of Pearson Correlations for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Relationships of SCPIS Subscales (Counselor Ratings) to Student Educational Outcomes.				
<i>Student Outcomes</i>	<i>SCPIS Program</i>	<i>SCPIS Data</i>	<i>SCPIS Services</i>	<i>Student-to-Counselor Ratio</i>
Suspension Rate			r = -.326 N = 67 p < .007	
Discipline Incident Rate				r = .244 ** N = 121 p < .007
Attendance Rate				r = .265 N = 111 P < .005
Graduation/Dropout Rate				
Average ACT Score				
% Taking ACT				
% Math Proficient	r = .298 N = 67 p < .014			
% Reading Proficient	r = .271			

	N = 67 p < .027			
% AP Participation				
Math Proficiency (Perkins)				
Reading Proficiency (Perkins)				
Technical Proficiency (Perkins)				
Program Completion (Perkins)				
Perkins Graduation (Perkins)				
Placement (Perkins)				
Nontraditional Program Participation	r = -.397 ** N = 50 p < .004			
Nontraditional Program Completion				

Consistent with the hierarchical linear regression results reported above, several important findings related to correlations between the SCPIS scales and student educational outcomes were noted. The SCPIS Program scale was associated with higher rates of Math proficiency and Reading proficiency. The SCPIS Services scale was associated with lower suspension rates. More favorable student-to-counselor ratios were associated with higher student attendance rates.

Two anomalous findings in these results were noted. First, lower student-to-counselor ratios were found to be associated with higher rates of disciplinary incidents. Secondly, higher scores on the SCPIS Program scale were found to be associated with lower rates of Nontraditional Program Completion (Perkins Data). Both results are hard to interpret. However, the first anomalous result would be

expected if schools with disciplinary problems were hiring additional school counselors to address these problems. The second anomalous result would be expected if nontraditional program participation were not typically considered to be a priority in school counseling programs. **Both of these possibilities should be evaluated in subsequent school counseling program evaluations.**

**These results strongly suggest that the implementation of better school counseling program delivery systems, stronger mechanisms for organizing the program, and the presence of student-to-counselor ratios that permit effective practice all contribute to several important educational outcomes for students including higher attendance, greater achievement in math and reading, higher attendance, and lower rates of suspension.**

#### *Correlation SCPIS Items and Student Educational Outcomes in High Schools*

Correlation between specific SCPIS items and student educational outcomes was undertaken in order to better characterize effective school counseling practice in Utah high schools. Table 14 contains the significant Pearson correlations.

Table 14. Summary of Pearson Correlations for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Relationships of SCPIS Items (Counselor Ratings) to Student Educational Outcomes.				
<i>SCPIS Item</i>	<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>Pearson r</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>P</i>
A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors.	Suspension Rate	-.339	68	.005
	Discipline Rate	-.412	68	.001
	Attendance Rate	.286	69	.017
	% Taking ACT	.437	60	.001
	% Math Proficient	.263	68	.030
	% Reading Proficient	.301	68	.013
	Graduation (Perkins)	.514	52	.001
Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to them.	Suspension rate	-.268	67	.028
	Non-Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.399 **	50	.004

The program operates from a plan for closing the achievement gap for minority and lower income students.	% AP Participation	-.254 **	60	.050
The program has a set of clear measurable student learning objectives and goals are established for academics, social/personal skills, and career development.				
Needs Assessments are completed regularly and guide program planning.				
All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.	Suspension Rate	-.313	66	.010
The program ensures that all students have academic plans that include testing, individual advisement, long-term planning, and placement.	% Math Proficient	.281	67	.021
	Graduation (Perkins)	.418	52	.002
The program has an effective referral and follow-up system for handling student crises.	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.368 **	50	.009
School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs.	% Math Proficient	.275	67	.024
	% Reading Proficient	.255	67	.038
School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps.	% Math Proficient	.367	67	.002
	% Reading Proficient	.359	67	.003
School counselor job descriptions match actual duties.	Discipline Rate	-.273	67	.025
	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.352 **	50	.012
School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.	Suspension Rate	-.333	67	.006
	Discipline Rate	-.273	67	.004
	% AP Participation	-.343 **	60	.007
	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.386 **	50	.006
The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards.	Discipline Rate	-.334	67	.004

An annual review is conducted to get information for improving next year's programs.	% Taking ACT	-.256 **	60	.049
School counselors use computer software to access student data.				
School counselors use computer software to analyze student data.				
School counselors use computer software to use data for school improvement				
The school counseling program has the resources to allow counselors to complete appropriate professional development activities.				
School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees.	Suspension Rate	-.370	67	.002
School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement.	Completion (Perkins)	.302	52	.029
The school counseling program develops yearly management agreements with principals to guide program goals and activities.	Suspension Rate	-.311	67	.011
	Discipline Rate	-.322	67	.008
	Graduation/Dropout Rate	.265	65	.033
	% AP Participation	.250	60	.050

From this table several aspects of effective practice can be discerned.

**Positive student educational outcomes can be expected to result when school programs are structured so that:**

- A written mission statement exists and is used as a foundation by all counselors.
- Services are organized so that all students are well served and have access to these services.
- All students receive classroom guidance lessons designed to promote academic, social/personal, and career development.

- School counselors use student performance data to decide how to meet student needs.
- School counselors analyze student data by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level to identify interventions to close achievement gaps.
- School counselor job descriptions match actual duties.
- School counselors spend at least 80% of their time in activities that directly benefit students.
- The school counseling program includes interventions designed to improve the school's ability to educate all students to high standards.
- School counseling priorities are represented on curriculum and education committees.
- School counselors communicate with parents to coordinate student achievement and gain feedback for program improvement.
- The school counseling program develops yearly management agreements with principals to guide program goals and activities.

Essentially, school counseling programs are more effective in helping to achieve important student educational outcomes when these programs engage in systematic planning and evaluation, focus school counselors' efforts on the professional work of school counseling, coordinate with school administration (e.g., through management agreements and accurate job descriptions), enable counselors to spend most of their time in work that directly benefits students, intentionally address educational attainment for all students, are integrated into the academic work of the school, and coordinate with parents.

Again these results contain some interesting anomalous findings that would seem to indicate that some aspects of better elaborated school counseling programs may be related to lower rates of ACT participation and lower participation rates in

nontraditional Perkins programs. These results are difficult to interpret but would be expected to occur if participation in the ACT and in nontraditional Perkins programs was not generally considered to be a priority of school counseling programs in Utah. This possibility should be investigated in subsequent evaluations.

*Correlations of and Time Use Items and Student Educational Outcomes in High Schools*

In order to investigate the relationships between different categories of time use by school counselors, the five time use items were correlated with the seventeen student educational outcomes using Pearson correlation procedures.

Table 15. Summary of Pearson Correlations for School Counseling Programs High Schools: Relationships of Counselor-Reported School Counselor Time Use to Student Educational Outcomes					
<i>Student Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent Guidance Curriculum</i>	<i>Percent Responsive Services</i>	<i>Percent Individual Planning</i>	<i>Percent System Support</i>	<i>Percent Role Inappropriate</i>
Suspension Rate			r = .249 ** N = 67 p < .043		
Discipline Rate					
Attendance Rate					
Graduation/Dropout Rate					
ACT Average					
Percent taking ACT		r = -.303 ** N = 60 p < .019			
% Proficient Math					
% AP Participation					
Proficient Reading (Perkins)					
Proficient Math (Perkins)				r = .364 N = 46	

				p < .013	
Proficient Technical (Perkins)					
Program Completion (Perkins)				r = .344 N = 52 p < .012	
Graduation (Perkins)				r = .315 N = 52 p < .023	
Placement (Perkins)					
Nontraditional Participation (Perkins)				r = .358 N = 50 p < .011	
Nontraditional Completion (Perkins)					

\*\* Refers to the anomalous correlations, i.e., significant in the “wrong” direction.

In contrast to other states that have widely varying time use patterns, there were very few interesting or important findings in this regard for this set of Utah data. The percentage of time school counselors spend in appropriate system support activities was found to be significantly associated with several features of more effective Perkins programs including: higher rates of Math Proficiency, Program Completion, Graduation, and Non Traditional Program Participation. It may be that spending more time in planning and coordination results in more effective Perkins Programs.

Two anomalous results were discovered: in schools that had higher suspension rates, school counselors spent relatively more time in Individual Planning activities; and in schools with lower percentages of ACT participation counselors spent relatively more time engaged in Responsive Services. In such

schools, it could be that a redirection of time into more preventative activities targeted at reducing suspensions and increasing college aspirations is warranted.

**More targeted follow-up to evaluations of school counseling practice in schools with high suspension rates and in schools with low ACT participation rates are warranted.**

#### *Correlations Student Educational Outcomes and Other Counselor Survey Items in High Schools*

Correlation between all survey items and student educational outcomes was undertaken in order to better characterize effective practice.

Table 16 contains the significant Pearson correlations between the counselor survey items that reflect school counseling practice and student educational outcome measures. Most of the individual items proved to be positively associated with one or more student educational outcomes.

**This positive association means that most of the school counseling practices studied in this evaluation were found to be associated with improved student learning outcomes. It is also important to note that the length of time that a Comprehensive Developmental Counseling program has been implemented may be important in determining the impact of school counseling activities on student outcomes. The length of time that a Comprehensive Developmental Counseling program has been implemented in a school was found to be significantly associated with both higher attendance rates and lower suspension rates.**

Table 16. Summary of Pearson Correlations for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Relationships of Counselor Survey Items to Student Educational Outcomes				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>p</i>
All students experiencing problems that might interfere with their school success can easily receive help from a school counselor.	Percent AP Participation	-.260 **	61	.043
	Placement (Perkins)	-.303 **	46	.040
School counselors effectively consult with administrators concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	Attendance Rate	.282	69	.019
	Graduation/Dropout Rate	.295	66	.016
	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.509	51	.001
School counselors effectively consult with community- based mental health professionals concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	Placement (Perkins)	-.412 **	46	.004
School counselors provide appropriate referral services for all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	Placement (Perkins)	-.338 **	46	.021
School counselors provide effective consultation to other school-based personnel concerning all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.	Suspension Rate	-.270	68	.026
	Attendance Rate	.269	69	.025
	Average ACT Score	.254	61	.049
	Placement (Perkins)	-.329	46	.026
Counselors provide effective college counseling services to all students.	Graduation/Dropout Rate	-.247 **	66	.046
Counselors implement and assist students in developing effective career and educational plans.				
The education and career planning process involves collaboration with students and parents/guardians to assist students in developing a four-year plan.	Percent Reading Proficient	.269	65	.030
Counselors provide all				

students and parents/guardians with accurate and up-to-date information about the world of work.				
The education and career planning process helps students create meaningful college and career plans.	Graduation/Dropout Rate	-.253 **	66	.040
School counselors help all students identify their interests and abilities.	Graduation/Dropout Rate	-.250	66	.043
School counselors help all students to create schedules that reflected their individual abilities, interests, and future goals.	Suspension Rate	-.294	68	.015
	Attendance Rate	.465	69	.001
	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	-.344 **	51	.013
An SEOP policy statement, based on district policy, has been created at my school.				
All students develop a formalized four- or five- year SEOP.	Graduation/Dropout Rate	.333	66	.006
	AP Participation	-.305 **	61	.017
The School Counseling program ensures that all students receive career development education, including career awareness, exploration, planning and application.	Reading (Perkins)	.299	51	.033
The career development process includes instruction on the Utah CTE High School to College and Career Pathways.	Graduation/Dropout Rate	.299	66	.015
Students are exposed to a wide range of career options as part of the guidance curriculum and SEOP conference.				
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking higher level math, science, and writing classes.	ACT Average	.278	60	.032
	Placement (Perkins)	-.325 **	45	.029
Students frequently use the	Suspension Rate	-.256	68	.035

career center before, during, and after school (outside of regular classes).	Math Proficiency (Perkins)	-.309 **	47	.035
	Technical Proficiency (Perkins)	-.320 **	45	.032
All counselors in our school have acquired the skills needed to implement a highly successful Comprehensive Guidance Program.				
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have built schedules based on their individual career goals.	Percent Taking ACT	.317	60	.014
	Percent Math Proficient	.333	67	.006
	Percent Reading Proficient	.251	67	.041
	Reading Proficiency Perkins	.316	51	.024
	Program Completion (Perkins)	.466	52	.001
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students have developed post-secondary education or training plans.	Reading Proficiency (Perkins)	.353	52	.010
	Program Completion (Perkins)	.365	53	.007
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are taking Career and Technical Education classes.	Suspension Rate	255	67	.037
	Discipline Rate	336	67	.005
As a result of the Comprehensive Guidance Program, more students are pursuing courses of study that exceed the ACT core recommendations for graduation (please refer to your ACT "High School Profile Report").	Technical Competence (Perkins)	- .311 **	41	.048
	Non Traditional Participation (Perkins)	- .291 **	47	.047
For how many years has a Comprehensive Guidance Program been implemented in your school?	Suspension Rate	-.247	68	.042
	Attendance Rate	.313	69	.009

\*\* Refers to the anomalous correlations, i.e., significant in the “wrong” direction.

Since this correlational analysis is based on single items rather than scales (which consist of several items) it is likely that there was insufficient statistical power to detect all the items associated with student outcomes. It is likely that this analysis detected the items that are most strongly associated with effective practice.

**Thus, at present, effective practices (i.e., those which positively impact student educational outcomes) can be considered to include:**

- School counselors consulting with administrators concerning students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.
- School counselors providing consultation to other school-based personnel concerning all students experiencing problems that interfere with school success.
- School counselors implementing a career planning process that involves collaboration with students and parents/guardians to assist students in developing a four-year plan.
- School counselors helping all students identify their interests and abilities.
- School counselors helping all students to create schedules that reflect their individual abilities, interests, and future goals.
- School counselors helping all students develop a formalized four- or five-year SEOP.
- School counselors implementing a program that ensures that all students receive career development education, including career awareness, exploration, planning and application.
- School counselors implementing a program that includes instruction on the Utah CTE High School to College and Career Pathways.
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that encourages more students to take higher level math, science, and writing classes.

- Having a career center available for student use before, during, and after school (outside of regular classes).
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that assists more students in building schedules based on their individual career goals.
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that helps more students develop post-secondary education or training plans.
- School counselors implementing a Comprehensive Guidance Program that encourages more students to take Career and Technical Education classes.

If these practices were fully implemented in a school, improvements in student learning outcomes would be expected to result.

As before, several items showed “anomalous” correlations with one or more student learning outcomes. For example, the Perkins Placement rate in schools was associated with counselor reports of greater accessibility of help for students in need, more extensive use of consultation with community mental health personnel, the presence of more extensive referral services for serious problems, and a greater focus on students taking higher-level math classes. Here, it could be that vocational/technical placement is less of a priority for school counseling programs in schools that place more emphasis on either managing students’ perceived mental health issues or on achieving higher levels of academic success. Follow up targeted evaluations of school counseling practices in schools with low Perkins placement rates may be warranted.

Table 17 contains the significant Point-Biserial correlations between the high school counselor survey items in Perkins program implementation (in dichotomous yes/no response format) and student educational outcome measures.

Table 17. Summary of Point Biserial Correlations for School Counseling Programs in High Schools: Relationships of Survey (Counselor Survey) Items in Dichotomous Response Format to Student Educational Outcomes				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>p</i>
Perkins Program of study are aligned with state career frameworks.	Discipline Rate	-.296	57	.026
Perkins Program of study are introduced to students and parents before the transition to high school for informed academic and career planning.				
Perkins Program of study include a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical education while in school.				
Perkins Program of study include post-secondary credit.				
Perkins Program of study lead to an associate's degree, baccalaureate or beyond, or certificate or license.				

Again, since this correlational analysis is based on single items rather than scales (consisting of several items) it is likely that there was insufficient statistical power to detect all the items associated with student outcomes. It is likely that this analysis detected the items most strongly associated with effective practice. Only one significant association was noted: **The degree to which a schools Perkins Programs are aligned with state career development frameworks is associated with a lower discipline incident rate.**

*Intermediate, Middle and Junior High School Hierarchical Linear Regression (Student Outcomes, Demographics, SCPIS & Ratios)*

Data from the Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools were analyzed as above. Hierarchical linear regression was used to determine if there was a significant contribution of the school counseling program to student educational outcomes after controlling for the variability in outcomes that is related to demographic differences among schools. Separate analyses were conducted for each of the five student outcome measures. In step one of each analysis, per pupil expenditures, percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, percentage of minority group students and school setting (i.e., rural, suburban or urban) were entered into the predictive equation. In step two, student-to-counselor ratio, SCPIS Program subscale, SCPIS Data Use subscale, and the SCPIS Services subscale were entered stepwise into the equation. This allowed for the identification of all variables that contributed to student outcomes after controlling for demographic differences. Separate analyses were conducted for the school counselor and principal SCPIS data. Results for the School Counselor SCPIS data are contained in Table 18.

Table 18. Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Results for School Counseling Programs in Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools: Contributions of SCPIS Subscales (Counselor Ratings) and Student-Counselor Ratios to Student Educational Outcomes					
<i>Student Outcome</i>	<i>Predictor variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Adjusted R2</i>	<i>R2 Change</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Suspension Rate					n.s.
Discipline Rate					n.s.
Attendance Rate					n.s.
Percent Math Proficient	SCPIS (Services)	.701	.441	.044	p. < .043

	SCPIS (Program)	.738	.544	.053	p. < .021
	Student/Counselor	.768	.590	.045	p. < .026
Percent Reading Proficient	SCPIS (Program)	.513	.189	.063	p. < .044
	SCPIS (Services)	.593	.272	.089	p. < .013

In the Intermediate, Middle, and Junior High Schools, higher scores on the SCPIS Program scale were found to be associated with higher percentages of students achieving Math proficiency and Reading proficiency. In addition the student-to-counselor ratios also accounted for a significant amount of the variability in Math proficiency.

**These results strongly indicate that school counseling programs in Utah's Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools are making measureable contributions to student achievement and that more effective delivery systems for school counseling services and more favorable student-to-counselor ratios can generally be expected to result in better student educational outcomes.**

Unfortunately, follow-up analyses for scales and items to identify specific effective practices failed to find interpretable patterns of results, probably because of the relatively small number of school at each of the three levels (i.e., Intermediate, Middle, and Junior High). **A follow up evaluation that captures school counseling program data from more Intermediate, Middle and Junior High Schools may be warranted.**

### *AYP Status and School Counseling Practice*

School counseling program features, school counseling practices, school counselor time use, and school counselor ratios were compared across High Schools, Junior High Schools, Middle Schools, and Intermediate Schools with three different levels of AYP status (i.e., Meeting AYP, Meeting AYP based on the Standard Error of Measurement, and not meeting AYP) to determine which, if any, aspects of school counseling practice were associated with a school's ability to attain AYP status. Counseling programs, practices and time use across the three levels were remarkably similar across schools in the three AYP categories.

The only significant difference ( $F = 14.26$ ;  $df = 2/119$ ;  $p < .0001$ ) noted was that the high schools that fully attained AYP status ( $M = 248/1$ ;  $N = 28$ ) had lower student-to-counselor ratios than both the high schools that failed to attain AYP status ( $M = 374/1$ ;  $N = 27$ ) or the high schools that attained AYP status by the benefit of use of the standard error of measurement ( $M = 354$ ;  $N = 67$ ).

**This evaluation found the most important difference in school counseling practice between AYP and non-AYP schools was the student-to-counselor ratio. AYP schools are much more likely to have favorable student to counselor ratios.**